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ORGANISING THE RESEARCH

General information about the research

The objective of the research was to ascertain whether the media space – conceived as the communicative dimension of the public sphere in Poland – is favourable to deliberation. Therefore, the first thing to be analysed was the way in which public discourses concerning the given topic exist or do not exist in the media. In the case of the current ones, their internal structure and dynamic was analysed, as well as the mechanisms that dictate their media visibility. Secondly, apart from analysing the media space, we also examined the role of the media themselves as actants in the field of promoting the ideas of deliberation and participation, creating certain representations of these concepts, as well as the function of mobilising citizens to participate in them and providing information on their progress.

The material selected for exploring how these mechanisms worked comprised topics linked to energy policy as an area of policy that is on the one hand presented as strategic for the country and extremely important for its citizens' quality of life, and on the other as complicated, difficult and demanding particular competences. Three subject areas were chosen from the related areas. In 2011, at the research planning stage, two of these were so-called "hot topics" that were capturing the media's attention – nuclear energy and shale gas. We also chose the topic of wind energy, as the form of alternative energy based on renewable energy sources that was the most recognised and most common in the Polish media. The initial exploratory research showed that wind energy tended to be treated as something of a counterpoint for the remaining two energy sources.

The main load of the analyses concerns current discourses, anchored "here and now," meaning in practice systematic monitoring of the media

for 12 months. We then conducted a qualitative analysis of the contents of the sources in selected periods from this time, permitting us to observe the continuity of the discourses, and thus the process of how the arguments used developed, topics were continued, actors were included and excluded as the discourses developed, the scenes of events were constructed, and specific definitions of the situation created and negotiated. Thanks to continual monitoring, the researchers were able to refer to the current socio-political situation.

As we accepted the premises of intertextual[1] continuity of topics and subjects in the sphere of media communication, we had to broaden the scope of the research, especially when current discourses referred to the past, forming points of anchoring in specific symbols, metaphors or historical constructions. We therefore also included historical press analyses. In the case of nuclear energy this concerned the time when the discourse on this subject appeared in the information media and then disappeared, i.e. the 1980s, and subsequently the five years immediately preceding the period of the current analyses, 2007–2012.

In the other two cases – shale gas and wind energy – we looked at press publications from the same period (2007–2012); the first publications on shale gas only appeared in late 2009, however. The selection of the same time period for the historical analyses for all three topics was intentional, as we assumed that the same actors would appear in different discourses, entering coalitions, forming resources and assuming positions towards various problems and values. The same period of analysis therefore made it possible to create a list of actors, resources and rules valid for the given time. It was assumed that these could be an important point of reference for analysing the mechanisms of development of the current discourses. In the press materials selected using key words we therefore picked a sample of texts which then underwent quantitative and qualitative analysis, the results of which became the point of reference for critical analysis of the media discourse for 2013–2014.

1 We cite the notion of intertextuality here following Mikhail Bakhtin (1975) to refer to the idea of dialogicality and polyphony of texts, moving beyond novels and applying this concept to what the author calls verbal-ideological reality and we construe in operational terms as a collection of texts (in the broad sense of a cultural text) accessible to its users within the existing contexts. Dialogicality here means that no statement exists in isolation, but it always refers to the contexts in which it existed previously or to which it can refer. Polyphony therefore, just as in a novel it means the existence of many voices expressing many worldviews of characters often polemical towards each other and not subject to the author's overriding consciousness, in the public sphere refers to the multitude of voices of various discourses all expressing their own judgements on the world and not subject to an overriding interpretation of the truth, but rather to the integrating-centralising tendencies created by these discourses, which Bakhtin calls cultural tendencies (cf. also Fairclough 2011).

To conclude, the research procedure encompassed three stages of analysis:

- Analysis of the 1980s press discourse on the subject of nuclear energy
- Analysis of the press discourse from 2007–2012 on wind energy, shale gas and nuclear energy
- Analysis of the media discourse (television, press, radio, internet) from deliberately selected periods between April 2013 and April 2014.

In addition, for the period from April 2013 to April 2014 we conducted a quantitative analysis of the contents of discussions concerning subject areas in social media using algorithms developed by the company SentiOne. The detailed methodological premises of this research are discussed in Chapter, which focuses on analysis of social media (Wit Hubert, "Representations of Selected Energy Topics on the Polish Internet").

Computer software was used for all the analyses on which this study is based. Analysis of the press and internet publications made use of the QDA Miner program, whereas ATLAS.ti was used for analysis of video and audio sources.

Research questions

The authors of the articles in this collection, discussing in turn the media discourses on nuclear energy, shale gas and wind energy, essentially try to answer the following research questions:

- Do the media create conditions for public deliberation, and how is this understood? Do the media create a bridge between deliberation at the micro and macro levels? Do they promote civic participation?
- Which mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion of actors are observed in the media discourses?
- How are power relations manifested? Can participatory discourse be (and is it) a space of domination?

The specific questions concern:

a) *Inclusiveness.* Who are the actors in the discourses, and what gives them their media visibility and status accorded in the communication? In what roles do they appear? What are the mechanisms of *inclusion* of actors? Can we observe any *counteracting of exclusion* – reference to missing actors, drawing attention to groups omitted in the discussion, diagnosis of the problems related to participation in the discussion?
b) *Ways of communicating*. What forms of communication are preferred in the discourse (e.g. emotional vs. rational approach)?
c) *Interests*. Which interests are articulated in the discussion, and which are assigned to actors? Are these entitled to claims for validity? Are

individual (group) interests expressed in the discourse, or the common interest – if so, how is this constituted? Are interests negotiated (something for something else) or agreed upon (persuasion), or are they accompanied by the search for a new solution? What are the mechanisms for legitimising interests (e.g. through the common good – defined how, and by whom?)? What are the mechanisms of delegitimisation of interests?

d) *Dialogicality*. Are the media discourses within a given topic polyphonic? What are the universal values accepted by the actors as foundations of the debate and of shaping energy policy? What anti-values are attributed to actors? Can we observe mechanisms of the "translatability of perspectives," and which ones? What are the mechanisms of establishing and developing arguments: discourse as interaction? What are the mechanisms of demonstrating respect?

Dialogicality at the discourse level is defined in reference to the idea of intertextuality (according to the presented understanding of it), and also refers to the level of the statements of actors, making use of the discourse quality index, initially designed for evaluation of parliamentary debates (Steenbergen 2003).

The dimensions of dialogicality here, then, are:

- *Participation* – the role of diverse actors in the debate, active participation in the media
- *Level of justification* – expressing one's own position, referring to opponents' position and counterarguments, referring to opponents' position and depreciating it or group of opponents without using counterarguments
- *Content of justification* – addressing group interests or common good (how is the common good defined – e.g. as the good of the majority or as a solution improving the position of the less privileged in the social structure?)
- *Respect accorded* – expressed in the statement
- *Capacity to change one's mind.*

e) *Objectives and forms of debate*. Can we observe attempts to reach a consensus (addressing the common good, searching for a new solution), or rather mapping of positions and differences (as a normative aim), striving for compromise (focus on negotiations) or imposing solutions (dominations)? Are forms of deliberation identified and promoted? Which ones (councils, advisory/consulting bodies, etc.)?

For the authors of the various chapters, the above questions provide a compass marking the direction of analytical reflection on the discourses focused on energy topics visible in the media space. At the same time, they critically discuss the aspects that are invisible in this space: omitted argu-

ments, absent actors, indicated areas of ignorance and the unpredictable, as well as how the public communication space deals with areas of the invisible and unspecified.

Historical analyses of press discourses

The history of discourses on nuclear energy stretches back to the period after the Second World War. A number of analyses carried out by social researchers throughout the world have shown not only that these discourses vary markedly, but also that they have a high degree of internal consolidation, and developed symbolic means, including iconic representations and a tendency towards polarisation of the groups organising themselves around these discourses (cf. Gamson, Modigliani 1989).

In Poland, to a large extent this discourse began to appear in the information media in 1985, as a result of the announcement of the intention to construct a reactor in the country. The Chernobyl disaster left its mark on nuclear discourses across the world, and the dynamic of the Polish discourse was no exception. The socio-political transformations that followed soon afterwards, and the decision to abandon the construction plans, meant that the discourse was put on hold for some years afterwards. Despite the fundamental differences in the functioning, role and importance of the media in the 1980s and today, what is surprising about comparing the nuclear discourses is firstly the persistence of certain structures of argumentation, but secondly the differing mechanisms used to legitimise these arguments. Retaining key concepts while changing their semantic scope – for example the understanding of risk – means that it is easier to visualise the dynamic of the development of the discourse and the mechanism of generating its internal rules.

The analysis of press material was a two-stage process. During the first stage, we carried out a quantitative analysis of selected content of publications. The analysis focuses on the frequency of coded categories and their mutual relations. The description contained:

- formal characteristics: title of newspaper, date of publication, nature of text (an opinion piece, i.e. statement including elements of judgement and interpretation, or news – a statement with a predominantly informative function, giving facts)
- characteristics of content: main subjects coded according to an open procedure, therefore based on the presence of specific events and issues which were then grouped into more general categories (e.g. con-

struction of nuclear power station, description of nuclear technology, Chernobyl accident – dealing with the fallout of the disaster, description of the events, preventive action, description of social tensions and conflicts, political tensions and conflicts, energy crisis, economic/civilisational development), and differing perspectives on them (domestic politics, international politics, economy, technology, environment).

The analyses also covered: the statement's context, the type of actors (individual/collective), judgements, language used (formal elements), elements of persuasion (semantic elements).

The research was carried out using a coding system method. The coding was performed in a partially closed way using the QDA Miner program. The coding involved taking general code categories, and then, based on the coded excerpts, disregarding code subcategories from the content. For example, we took the category of "persuasion" (from the aim of the statement), then from those passages classed as persuasive identified the persuasive mechanisms employed in the texts. This type of coding not only allowed us to use codes embedded in the texts, but also made it easier to work consistently during the second, qualitative stage of the research.

We should add that during the research we decided not to use separable coding, as codes overlapped (e.g. a particular person appeared in one article as both an expert and a politician). The piloting of the methods was performed independently by three people on the same textual material. Only the version remaining after discussion and modifications was used as the basis for the final research.

In the second stage of the study we used situational analysis methodology as described by Adele Clarke (cf. Kacperczyk 2007) – the categories resulting from the first stage were used to draw up maps illustrating the relations between them. To this end we carried out an analysis of situational maps and an analysis of social worlds and arenas. This method is discussed in detail below.

Building a corpus of texts from the 1980s

The selection of texts was based on the National Library of Poland's Index of the Content of Periodicals. This demonstrated a significant increase in the number of articles on energy issues in the general press in 1986. We took as the culmination point in the 1980s the nuclear power station disaster in Chernobyl. In 1985, the planned construction of the power station in Poland led to a marked increase in the frequency of references to nuclear energy in the Polish press compared to previous years, when it had been mentioned

almost solely in the technical trade press. After 1986 and until the end of the 1980s, the subject of nuclear energy cropped up increasingly rarely.

After drawing up a list of the articles published in the general information press from 1985 to 1989 recorded by the Index of the Content of Periodicals, we omitted from further analysis those titles in which articles were published only sporadically (one-two articles per year), instead focusing on analysis of those which permitted a certain continuity of the discourse.

From the initial corpus, we therefore excluded the following titles: *Pobrzeże*, *Przegląd Techniczny*, *Tygodnik Demokratyczny*, *Przegląd Tygodniowy*, *Energetyka*, *Zeszyty Naukowe*, *Nauka Polska*, *Życie Gospodarcze*, and *Państwo i Prawo*. This left the initial corpus of texts, which is presented in detail in Appendix 1.

After the initial selection of material (in terms of the actual thematic fit), 63 articles published from January 1985 to December 1989 qualified for the analysis. The analysed titles are described in brief in Appendix 2.

Nuclear, shale, wind energy – the press discourse from 2007–2012

As with the analysis of 1980s press discourse, there were two stages to the research. These were a *quantitative analysis of the content of selected periodicals and a qualitative situational analysis of press texts*. The aim of the quantitative research was to produce a list of the elements that appeared in the discourses, which were then analysed in terms of the relations linking them. The main categories used in the method from the previous stage were again applied, including:

- formal characteristics: title of newspaper, date of publication, nature of text (an opinion piece, i.e. statement including elements of judgement and interpretation, or news – a statement with a predominantly informative function, giving facts, interview)
- characteristics of content: main subjects (construction of nuclear power station in Poland, the workings of nuclear power stations in the world, description of nuclear technologies, alternative energy sources, energy crisis, energy security, environmental issues (other than sources), increase in energy costs, economic situation, energy balance in the country, events, international cooperation, law, others), and perspectives on them (political-administrative, political-economic, economic, technological, educational, environmental, "lifeworld," others)

- functions of the text: context of statement, individual actors, collective actors, judgements, language of statement (formal elements), elements of persuasion (semantic aspects), discursive constructs, such as conflict, contemporary and past experiences, visions of the future, numerical data – statistics, dimensions etc., key events, solutions and proposals) categorised using the coding system.

We also made use of vocabulary analysis. To do this, we conducted a word frequency analysis, which was then used to identify the key words and vocabulary construction with QDA Miner software. Cluster analyses allowed us to identify the concentration of key words (designated in advance on the basis of the frequency analysis) according to the Jaccard index (*Provalis Research* 2009) (an article was deemed to be one unit of analysis). We were able to use these images of the concentrations of key words to model the dominant elements of description of energy topics (e.g. concepts from economics, politics, ecology, technology, everyday life, etc.).[2]

Building a corpus of texts from 2007–2012

The logic of the construction of a corpus of texts was analogous for all three energy topics. The selection of texts was based on collecting all the articles containing key words defined in a given topic, published between 2007 and 2012 in the daily newspapers *Gazeta Wyborcza* and its local supplements, *Rzeczpospolita* and its thematic supplements, and *Fakt*, and the weeklies *Newsweek*, *Polityka* and *Wprost*.

Nuclear energy

The texts included in the set were those that contained one of the key phrases in all grammatical cases. For nuclear energy these were variations of "nuclear/atomic power station/plant" and "nuclear/atomic energy/power (production)" (*elektrownia jądrowa*, *elektrownia atomowa*, *energetyka jądrowa*, *energetyka atomowa*, *energetyka nuklearna*, *energia jądrowa*, *energia atomowa*, *energia nuklearna*, *siłownia jądrowa*, *siłownia atomowa*).

From this frame, comprising 1252 articles, we eliminated repeat texts, illegible ones, or those making analysis impossible, thus ending up with a

2 Further examples of this type of analysis are Wagner (2010), and Świątkiewicz-Mośny and Wagner (2012).

set of 990 press articles. We then drew a representative sample (assuming a confidence level of 0.95 and an error of 0.05%), taking into account the proportion of texts published in given years. Texts of television programmes and summaries of feature films containing the key phrases were eliminated from the analysis.

The structure of the sample is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Articles on nuclear energy – structure of sample

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	TOTAL
Number of articles in frame	248	266	133	171	71	101	990
Number of articles in sample	74	76	40	47	21	34	292

Source: own elaboration.

Wind energy

For wind energy, the key words were the following: "wind energy (production)" (*energetyka wiatrowa*, *energia wiatrowa*, "wind power station" (*elektrownia wiatrowa*), "wind farm" (*farma wiatrowa*). Searching the press archives for occurrences of the key phrases resulted in 1103 texts. Of these, using the same logic of sample selection described above, we chose 286. The corpus of texts built in this way thus comprised 286 articles. Table 2 presents their breakdown into specific titles.

Table 2. Articles on wind energy – structure of sample

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	TOTAL
Number of articles in frame	196	257	228	173	146	103	1103
Number of articles in sample	51	66	58	45	28	27	275

Source: own elaboration.

Given that information concerning local supplements was also recorded, it is possible to draw up a press wind map of Poland. Most texts appeared in the Tri-City local supplement (29), followed by Poznań and Szczecin (12). The spatial distribution of texts coincides with the areas with most wind turbines. These are also the areas with the best potential as sites for wind farms owing to the strength of the wind.

Shale gas

For shale gas the following key phrases were used: "shale gas" (*gaz łupkowy*), "unconventional gas" (*gaz niekonwencjalny*), "shale" (*łupki*); in the last case texts not addressing shale gas were discarded manually. The sampling logic applied for wind and nuclear energy was again retained, as was the publication period. In practice, however, the analysis covered texts published from 2010 to 2012, as in 2007–2008 no single article containing the key phrase was recorded, and in 2009 just two articles.

From the resultant frame, comprising 1738 articles, we removed repeat texts, illegible ones, or those making analysis impossible, thus ending up with a set of 1713 press articles. We then drew a representative sample (assuming a confidence level of 0.95 and an error of 0.05%), taking into account the proportion of texts published in given years. Table 3 depicts the structure of the sample.

Table 3. Articles on shale gas – structure of sample

	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	RAZEM
Number of articles in frame	861	643	207	2	0	0	1713
Number of articles in sample	164	120	40	0	0	0	324

Source: own elaboration.

The dynamic increase in the number of articles published in 2010–2012 particularly applies to *Rzeczpospolita* daily. This clear numerical supremacy (more than 50% of the analysed articles) affects the nature of the discourse on shale gas owing to this newspaper's distinct profile as a legal-economic daily. However, the overrepresentation of texts published in this newspaper also influences the visibility of a specific type of discourse in the public sphere, and points to a clear indication of perception of shale gas in the context of economic and legal issues.

Analysis of discourse from 2013—2014

The third stage of the data analysis was a comprehensive analysis of the national and local information media, conducted in three selected two-week periods over a 12-month period between April 2013 and April 2014.

The analysis of the material took place separately for each type of media – press, internet, radio and television – with the last two being joined together

as radio/TV, taking into account the differences between the two media. The shift from the subject matter to the type of medium as the criterion of the analysis was intended to permit a comparative analysis within a given form of media. Although the various topics were coded separately, this allowed the researchers to work in a more comprehensive and flexible manner with the material, reconstructing the links between given energy sources in the discursive strategies of a given group of actors as well as forming coalitions of sorts between them. The same subjects often referred to various energy sources simultaneously depending on the situation, treating them as competing or complementing each other on the energy market. Within each medium we separated the discourse focused on a given topic.

The starting media material was monitored for 12 months – from 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014 – by a company called Press Service. The following media outlets were monitored:

- Television: TVP1, TVP2, TVN, Polsat and TVP Szczecin, TVP Łódź, TVP Katowice, TVP Lublin, TVP Gdańsk, TVP Białystok, TVP Katowice, TVP Poznań
- Radio: RMF, Radio Zet, PR1, PR3 and Polskie Radio: Lublin, Gdańsk, Szczecin, Białystok, Katowice, Łódź, Poznań
- Press: national and local editions of *Gazeta Wyborcza*, *Rzeczpospolita* and *Dziennik Polski*, as well as local media: *Polska – Głos Wielkopolski* (Greater Poland), *Kurier Szczeciński* (West Pomerania), *Polska – Dziennik Bałtycki* (Pomerania), *Gazeta Olsztyńska* (Warmia-Masuria), *Gazeta Współczesna* (Podlasie), *Dziennik Wschodni* (Lublin), *Super Nowości* (Subcarpathia), *Dziennik Polski* (Kraków) (Lesser Poland/Małopolska), *Echo Dnia* – (Holy Cross/Świętokrzyskie), *Polska – Dziennik Zachodni* (Silesia), *Nowa Trybuna Opolska* (Opole), *Polska – Gazeta Wrocławska* (Lower Silesia), *Gazeta Lubuska* (Gorzów) – Lubuskie, *Gazeta Pomorska* (Bydgoszcz) (Kuyavia-Pomerania), *Polska – Dziennik Łódzki* (Łódź)
- Media with an information/economic profile: *Parkiet*, *Puls Biznesu*
- Opinion weeklies: *Wprost*, *Polityka*, *Newsweek*, *Gość Niedzielny*
- Internet: 50 websites (portals) chosen for their content and scope (the average number of hits was taken into account).

A detailed breakdown of the sources we analysed is provided in Appendix 3. Furthermore, in addition to the internet analysis, the intensification of the discourse on social media for the three subject areas according to the key words given above was studied. This research was carried out by the company SentiOne, whose methodology is described in detail by Wit Hubert in "Representation of selected energy topics on the polish internet". At this point we should stress that the internet was treated as a public sphere, and thus the analysis covered those areas of it that fulfil the condition of open access. Private profiles closed to the general public, meant for circles of friends, or selected members of groups, were outside the scope

of the study. The focus on those websites and social media with the largest number of users complies with our criterion of visibility. In Poland the most popular way of finding information is using the Google search engine – 80% of web users do so. Moreover, most of them make use of pages that Google displays on the first page of search results. Among the factors taken into account by the search mechanism is the number of hits to a page, its description (whether it is connected to the user's enquiry), links to other pages linking to it and the user's search history (for more on page ranking see http://infolab.stanford.edu/~backrub/google.html). A page's visibility on the internet, understood as the extent to which users notice it among the plethora of contents, makes it easier to search for it, which in turn increases its visibility. For users without any special interests, searching for basic contents, this is the most important category, as it decides on the sources of information that they find (note that active, and therefore expensive, promotion of contents also leads to an increase in their visibility). Users with an already specified profile of interests have a good chance of arriving at a certain type of profile, i.e. remaining closed in a certain information niche (cf. Juza 2016; Fuchs 2014). The year-long media monitoring allowed us to produce an extensive starting material base containing texts, audio and video recordings, as well as photographs. The total amounts obtained were:

- Radio/TV material: nuclear – 759, shale gas – 1080, wind – 411, total – 2250 recordings
- Press material: nuclear – 1387, shale gas – 1627, wind – 1105, total – 4119 press texts
- Internet: nuclear – 3753, shale gas – 5064, wind – 2847, total – 11,664 internet publications.

This gives a total of 18,033 units of analysis.

It was necessary to reduce the material before conducting qualitative analyses. We wished to preserve the subject continuity and assumed connections between the various media, and therefore opted for a deliberate sample of the periods characterised by the highest intensity of publication of contents linked to a given topic. The method used to designate these periods was inspired by methodology for identifying trends (Murphy 1999). Since 70% of the radio/TV material comprised brief news bulletins, and the internet was characterised by a high degree of repetitiveness of contents, the most suitable way of measuring the intensity of discourse was deemed to be the number of press publications in a given period. We therefore compiled a breakdown of the frequency of publications from a daily perspective for 12 months for each subject area. Two 2-week periods and one 1-week period were chosen, each of them showing a trend for a growing number of publications up to a culmination point, and then a reduction of this intensity to a lower number than that observed at the start of the increase.

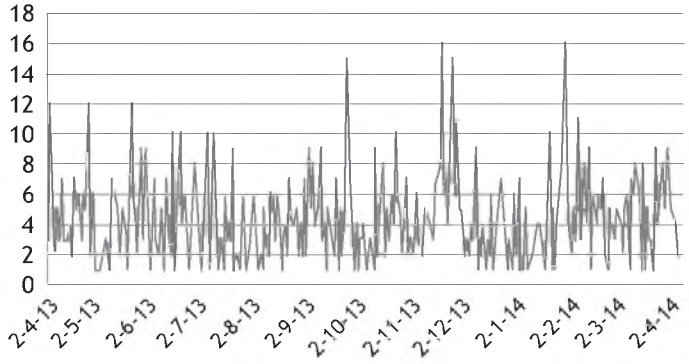

Chart 1. Frequency of press publications on nuclear energy
Source: own elaboration.

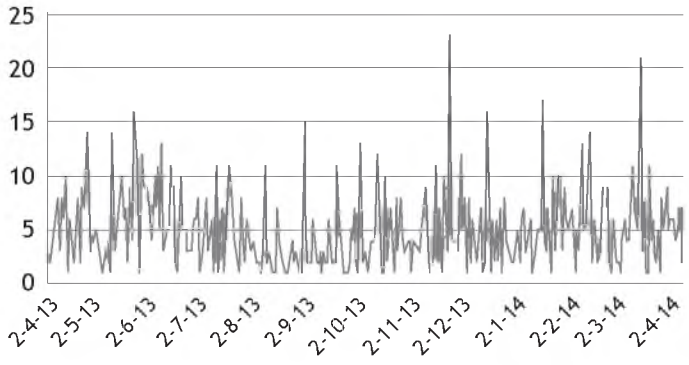

Chart 2. Frequency of publications on shale gas
Source: own elaboration.

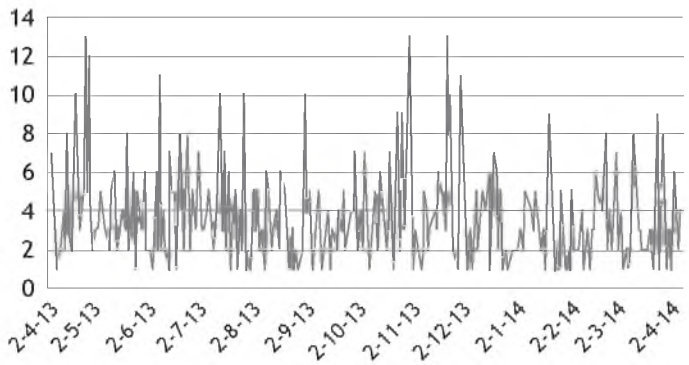

Chart 3. Frequency of publications on wind energy
Source: own elaboration.

This resulted in three periods being selected for each subject area (see Table 4).

Table 4. Periods of publication of texts and radio/TV programmes included in the analysis

Nuclear	25 Nov–7 Dec 2013	27 Jan–8 Feb 2014	24–29 Mar 2014
Shale gas	17–30 Nov 2013	6–20 Jan 2014	10–16 Mar 2014
Wind	15–29 Apr 2013	20 Oct–2 Nov 2013	20–26 Mar 2014

Source: own elaboration.

There are certain limitations to the chosen method of material selection. Firstly, when analysing the discourses during their largest media intensity it is important to remember that the dynamic of this discourse will be set by events that propel the interest in a given subject. Given the nature of mainstream media, these are most likely to be political and economic events, conflicts or scandals.

One can therefore assume that at times when the visibility of a specific topic increases in the public sphere, there will be diverse groups mobilising their resources to have a presence in the media space. Yet their chances will certainly prove to be unequal. Marginalised discourses, which are weaker in terms of visibility, have greater opportunities to gain media interest at times lacking in spectacular events. As a result, however, they receive less social attention. Since 65% of people declare a lack of interest in energy issues, additional stimulation is required to attract public attention. The objective of the third stage of the research was to characterise the communication and media space of a given type of media as a space of the public sphere and a place of deliberation on the main issues of energy. Constructing discursive maps for a specific type of medium and within a given subject area was the basis of the next step – a discourse meta-analysis conducted by the researchers on the basis of all reports and databases as well as maps, notes and working materials that had been produced. The framework of this analytical work was demarcated by a critical discourse analysis whose core was inspired by the approach of Fairclough (2011), taking into account not only the sociolinguistic level but also the intertextual dynamics and socio-cultural references.

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